

14<sup>th</sup> World Congress on  
**PSYCHIATRIC & MENTAL HEALTH NURSING**  
&  
5<sup>th</sup> World Congress on  
**MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING**  
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## **Integration of spiritual healers in the mental health team**

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Mental health is among the most vexing social and medical problems of our era. Medications are effective, though access, costs, stigma, side effects, and health risks may deter utilization. Likewise, professional psychotherapy helps yet is unaffordable and unavailable to many and, even when empirically based treatments can be accessed, relapse, mortality, and morbidity are the rule with mental disorders. Therefore, there is an urgent need for affordable and accessible treatment options. We all are baffled by the thought that the processes of non-pharmacological interventions that is so successful in the western, just does not find any takers in the eastern world. Despite so much evidence in favor of the number of therapies and techniques, still, these continue to be on the fringes of the eastern mental health treatment. Alternative or complementary medical and spiritual approaches are promising and are associated with excellent patient acceptance. There appears to be an upward trend toward acceptance and utilization of these 'complementary' practices. Evidence suggests that meditation practice is associated with neuro-plastic changes in various regions of the brain such as the anterior cingulate cortex, insula, and temporoparietal junction. Studies on long-term meditators suggest structural changes in the form of pre-frontal differences as well as insular differences in the form of increased grey matter. (Holzel et al., 2008; Luders, Toga, Lepore, and Gaser, 2009). We want to create a model of assimilation wherein the eastern practices are incorporated in such a way that the whole model is more acceptable to the developing world. We address the spiritual practices viz. Yoga and meditation as an alternative or complementary form of mind-body medicine.

### **Biography**

Dr. Puneet Kathuria has been blessed to serve humanity in the developing world, has been treating patients since 2006 as a practising Consultant Psychiatrist. He has held various positions in the Indian Psychiatric Society as well as the Indian Association of Private Psychiatry (IAPP). He is currently the National Chairperson of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Committee of IAPP. He also runs a foundation of his own called the Elpis Welfare Society, working for the cause of mental health. He runs half marathons to keep him fit. He currently is the Director of Prem Neuropsychiatry Centre, K K Hospital and The Global Child Wellness Centre based at Ludhiana, Punjab, India.

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